



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

REGION 6
1445 ROSS AVENUE, SUITE 1200
DALLAS, TX 75202-2733

MAY 14 2004

Georgia Cranmore
Assistant Regional Administrator
Protected Resources Division
National Marine Fisheries Service
Southeast Regional Office
9721 Executive Center Drive North
St. Petersburg, Florida 33702-2432

Subject: Section 7(a)(2) Consultation on the proposed re-issuance of the National Pollution Discharge Elimination System General Permit No. GMG290000.

Dear Ms. Cranmore:

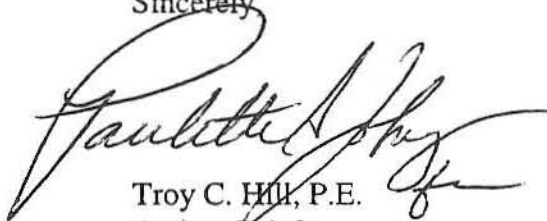
Region 6 of the Environmental Protection Agency proposes to reissue the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) general permit No. GMG290000 for existing source and New Source facilities in the Offshore Subcategory of the Oil and Gas Extraction Point Source Category (40 CFR Part 435, Subpart A), located in and discharging to the Outer Continental Shelf offshore of Louisiana and Texas. The discharge of produced water to that portion of the Outer Continental Shelf from Offshore Subcategory facilities located in the territorial seas of Louisiana and Texas is also authorized by this permit.

EPA requests concurrence from the National Marine Fishery Service with our determination that the issuance of the NPDES permit No. GMG290000 may affect but is unlikely to adversely affect the federally listed endangered sperm whale, green turtle, hawksbill turtle, Kemp's ridley turtle, leatherback turtle and the threatened loggerhead turtle nor will destroy or adversely modify designated critical habitat. In the absence of such concurrence, this letter further serves as a written request under the provisions of 50 CFR 402.14 to initiate formal consultation with the Service on the effects of permit re-issuance on listed threatened and endangered species.

EPA has determined, based on the distribution of species in the Gulf of Mexico and protections provided by the permit, that the re-issuance of this permit will have no effect on the federally listed sei whale, northern right whale, blue whale, fin whale, humpback whale, gulf sturgeon or West Indian manatee. Please find Attachment 1 which describes the permit action and EPA's determination of effects. Attachments 2 and 3 are the proposed NPDES permit and supporting document, the fact sheet, which explains the methodology for determining permit requirements.

The EPA staff contact for this consultation is Denise Hamilton. Should you have any questions concerning this action, Denise is ready to provide any possible assistance and can be reached by telephone at (214) 665-2775, by E-mail at hamilton.denise@epamail.epa.gov, or by fax at (214) 665-2191.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Troy C. Hill", written over the typed name.

Troy C. Hill, P.E.
Acting Chief
NPDES Permits Branch

Enclosures

cc w/o attachments:

US Fish and Wildlife Service, Region 2

US Fish and Wildlife Service, Region 4